2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

124 Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

115 I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work
● 123 exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight
[609 and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was
603] fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

123 While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the
124 School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

123
124

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed.

128
124

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed.

128
126

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America.

[p. xiv is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

114 The Boy and the other Gros Ventres who cooperated with Dr. Cooper were most anxious to have preserved for the future the religious phases of their culture. The term "religious" is of course to be taken in a very broad sense. In comparing the present account with that published by Dr. Kroeber in 1907 differing emphases emerge. In the early years of the century some of the magico-religious beliefs and practices were still operative among the Gros Ventres and were not willingly explained by their practitioners. On the one hand, therefore, our account is much fuller and more explicit than is Dr. Kroeber's concerning the sacred Pipes, the meaning of the various rituals and of the personal supernatural powers,—all illustrated by our informants through reference to identifiable individuals no longer living. On the other hand Dr. Kroeber's treatment of the ceremonial dances is more complete. Inasmuch, however, as details given by our informants supplement his description, it was decided to publish ours in full despite some overlapping. Similarly it was thought worthwhile to present such myths and tales as were volunteered by our informants since some of these show variations upon those in the much more complete collection by Dr. Kroeber, and a couple of myths obtained by us do not appear in his series. One of these latter confirms his earlier prediction that certain of the more widespread motifs, which did not occur in the tales obtained by him, should be found among the Gros Ventres.

114 Because neither Doctor Cooper nor I had witnessed any of the latter day ceremonies in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as the opening of the Flat Pipe bundle in 1946, The Boy initiated the holding of a ceremony when I was on the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1948. In it he enacted the role of keeper of the Flat Pipe and went through some of the ritual, though the Pipe was not unwrapped at that time. The photos in Plates 1 and 2A were taken on this occasion. For Plate 1 A-B we are indebted to Mr. Duke Wellington, Agent of the Fort Belknap Reservation, who received his Gros Ventre name just after the Flat Pipe ceremony was completed. I took those on Plates 1C and 2A.

We are grateful to Dr. Louis W. Hagener, Professor of Biology, Northern Montana College, for information regarding the 1951

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

778 was a wooden staff about three or four feet long, to which were attached feathers from "all kinds of birds," including the eagle, the feathers literally covering the staff. The staff itself was given the first keeper in the beginning from above, but tradition is not consistent as to whether it was already feathered or was later feathered by this keeper. At any rate the feathers still on the staff are believed to be the original ones, are not broken off and are perfectly preserved. According to one report the staff has porcupine quill work on it; according to another, it is undecorated. The first keeper wrapped the stick in smoked skin, for which a wrapping of black and white cotton flannel was later substituted.

The image, called inite:até (it is a person) translated "human [532] face," was described to us as about eight inches long, of stone, "with a trace of faded red in it" and looking like the "brown pottery of a teapot," of human shape, male according to one informant, female according to another. It was wrapped in buffalo hair and until Curly Head's keepership was rarely unwrapped, and even when unwrapped only the face was supposed to be exposed, by raising a bit of the cover, although Curly Head exposed the whole figure.[6] Formerly, according to Garter Snake, nobody was allowed to look at the face, except the keeper and even he could do so only now and then. Garter Snake, although Pipe child for six or seven years while her father Bull Lodge was keeper, had never seen it. Sitting High, who succeeded Bull Lodge, showed the face of the image very rarely, only once or twice so far as Al Chandler, his grandson, had heard, and even old-timers wondered what it looked like. Sitting High would take the wrapped image out of the large bundle and let you hold it and pray to it, and this oftener than he would the Pipe, but without un-

[6] Although this has not been confirmed, it is highly possible that the pipe shown at the 1951 unwrapping and pictured in Plate 3 C-D may actually be this "human face" or image. The stone and color of the pipe meet the specifications (cf. Dr. Hegener's comment as given in footnote 5), the plat- [23] form of the pipe is of about the right dimension, and one end thereof is carved in the form of a human face as can be seen in Dr. Nitz' photographs. Dr. Hagener noted on the back of the photograph in Plate 3 C that Iron Man allowed the picture to be taken only after long consultation with others and much hesitation. [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 828 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy distinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk ● [123] with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Being. The things asked for in the prayer would differ according to the occasion.

782 At the elaborate naming feast at which Flannery was adopted and given her name the following two prayers offered by The Boy 583 who was in charge of the ceremony may serve as examples of [123] these longer solemn prayers of which we are here speaking. As The Boy makes it a practice to plan carefully whatever he intends to utter in public, we may be reasonably sure that he had given much thought ahead of time to the form and content of these two prayers.

Before partaking of the lunch which was an integral feature of the naming rite, The Boy took a piece of bread and standing held it aloft while he prayed as follows before depositing a bit of the bread in each of the four corners of the stage of the community hall where the rite was held:

553 "Supreme Being, look down upon us as we sit here today. We are going to eat of the food which you gave to us. We are glad. 782 We are thankful for this gift of food that we are going to eat. 539 Whenever we, your children, displease you and do things contrary to your law, forgive us for these, we pray you. Also look down upon us here today as we sit together and help us to successfully portray our poor life which you have allowed us to live by for so many ages. We have reached the end of that long trail of life that you have allowed us to live by, and bowing to your will we accept the conditions of today, different as they may be from yesterday, because this is your will. And in your mercy and consideration for our conducted [sic] life and assistance, give us food, give us breath, so that we may live out our lives according to your plan. And protect, watch over our loved ones who are participating and fighting in a terrible war,[4] so that they may come back to us safe and unhurt, so that once more they may set their feet upon the soil of their birthplace. This is their heritage."

After lunch and some smoking and chatting The Boy called all to order. Then, seated, he held a pipe stem pointed upward and finally downward and prayed:

"Master of All, of the above and of the below and of the entire

[4] This refers to the many Gros Ventre young men then, 1945, in the armed forces while World War II was still going on.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of our ancestors, and that they may gain inspiration from our legends, traditions and heritages and the history of the world that repose in this bundle of the Flat Pipe as the Indian race understands your creation of the world. So that my grandchildren may learn to have that strong character possessed by our ancestors and their utmost sincerity of purpose of [and?] the true philosophy of life on earth. And that they may merge this sterling character into the life of this day and age.

"As I stand here today, I am fully conscious and fully realize that the White man is here to stay. And that we, the Indians, must live according to his way of life.

"I pray that White Shield [Cooper] may be restored back to good health. And I pray that Chief Woman [Flannery] may live a long, and a healthy, happy life. I pray that the Black-Robed missionaries of St. Paul's Mission [the Jesuit Fathers] may succeed in their efforts to teach us the true way of life. I pray that our leaders of the Indian people may be inspired to do good work for their people.

"My Father, I talk to you today with all of my person, and with all my heart and my mind. I give You thanksgiving for hearing my weak and mortal voice, and from my heart I ask You to again listen to my prayer, which I am making most devoutly and which is my most earnest wish."[a]

The question as to when the Gros Ventres prayed has been partly answered passim in the treatment of the sacred Pipe rituals, the sacred Dances, ghost helpers, and power. We shall here include other occasions and situations calling for or accompanied by prayer: spring time, mealtime, bedtime, hunting, river crossing, storms, the aged.

The Gros Ventres prayed, as occasion arose, at all seasons of the year, but spring time was looked upon as a particularly propitious time not only for seeking power, but also for other kinds of praying. The point of view may be illustrated by excerpts from a letter of March 24, 1945, from The Boy to Cooper. The letter was not just dashed off hurriedly or without previous thought. For composing it, The Boy explained orally the following summer to

[a] School Sisters of St. Francis, 1946, pp. 3-4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

782 Flannery: "I tried to be well prepared by a long period of study
● 123 as to what to tell him [Cooper] so that I could do something big for his health, that his health might be restored. I sort of prepared for this all winter long and then decided I would write this letter to him in the Spring of the year when everyone seems to feel good and [to be] glad that they are still living and that they survived the hardships of the winter and that it is time for rejoicing and that even the animals are glad that spring had come around again. They then woke up from their long sleep of hibernation when they bored underground or under a pile of rocks or whichever way they could get away from . . . winter. I tried to get him [Cooper] the full benefit of it. I am glad to hear he liked it. I tried hard to put into words what I wanted for my friend [Cooper], and so that he would get more I chose that time of the year [spring]. That is when all the animals wake up and talk and sing and move around and let the whole world know: 'I am still around too.' . . . They have made a real effort to live that long. . . . They try to keep themselves in existence as long as they can by growing and singing and running and so forth. . . . If I made my friend feel better and was able to master the great distance between us [Montana to Washington, D. C.] with those few words, I am exceedingly glad and will always feel good when I recall that letter and those words because they made him feel good. Besides my words written down, everything that I had went with them."

[191] [212] The Boy's message in the letter, as translated very carefully from his dictation in Gros Ventre and written down by his nephew, Thomas Main, was in part as follows:

123 539 782 "Dear friend—As winter is over and spring is on in its place, it makes one feel good. And as I listen to the talking song of the meadow larks they bring back pleasant memories of my association with you. So I am writing this letter to bring my thoughts into expression.

"I hope I can infuse and saturate into this paper my feelings for you and my concern for your welfare and doctor you with the tidings and blessings which the season of spring always brings, when all nature arises from a long sleep, so that you too may enjoy the healing winds and sunshine which abound at this time.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

539
782
123

"I have heard that your health [has not been good] . . . and it is my earnest hope that you may get back your health. I shall never forget nor cease to appreciate the encouragement you gave me when I was losing my health rapidly, and your promise to pray for me so that my health might be restored back to me.[6] I sincerely believe that your prayer was heard, as my health seems to be improving, even in my advancing age.

"So now it is my turn to pray that your life span may be extended, and among other good things to which you apply your mind that you may further contribute to the great study of the races and peoples of the earth.

"I have told you in my story of the Gros Ventres before the days of the white man, which includes the belief of my ancestors, that in the spring of the year is when one's prayers are more readily heard, and that was the time that the Indians in the long ago went to the hills, streams and mountain tops to fast and pray.

"We, the Gros Ventres, pray and implore the Supreme Being to protect our boys fighting on the various fronts in this great war, and so far only one Gros Ventre boy has been killed, out of many who are in the service. And we also pray that this terrible war and this mass killing may soon stop and that a just and lasting peace may be declared, so that the great family of nations may be true brothers again and go on with life in harmony and prosperity.

. . .

"I will now close and I am very glad to have spoke to you on this paper and it is my sincere hope that you can feel my words, so that they will do you good and doctor you.[7] With a good and hearty handshake, I am

Your friend
The Boy"

782
514

In the spring, The Boy's father, Lame Bull, would at bedtime after all were lying down, sing certain songs after first praying for himself, his household and all the people. Whether this bedtime

[6] See p. 366, in references to The Boy's illness in 1940. In 1948, The Boy again mentioned gratefully Cooper's prayer for him. [R.F.]

[7] Some of the expressions used in this letter seem to be implicit references to the efficacy of the sincere wish as well as of prayer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

PLATES

123 All of the photographs making up these plates were taken in the vicinity of Hays, on the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana.

The pictures of the Flat Pipe ceremony were taken in 1948, Plates 1A and 1B, by Mr. Duke Wellington, Plates 1C and 2A, by Regina Flannery.

Dr. Otto Nitz took in 1951 the pictures of the Feathered Pipe ceremony on Plates 2B, 2C, and the four on Plate 3.

The Boy gave to Dr. Cooper the picture taken in the early 1900's, of the painted lodge shown as Plate 4A. The other two lodges shown on Plate 4 were photographed by Dr. Karl Herzfeld in 1940.